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**Regulation of Abeta pathology by beclin 1: a protective role for autophagy?**

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**Public Summary:**

**Scientific Abstract:**

The amyloid beta (Abeta) peptide is thought to be a major culprit in Alzheimer disease (AD), and its production and degradation have been intensely investigated. Nevertheless, it remains largely unknown how Abeta pathology is modulated by the autophagy pathway. The study by Pickford and colleagues in this issue of the JCI shows that beclin 1, a multifunctional protein that also plays an important role in the autophagy pathway, affects some aspects of Abeta pathology in aged but not young transgenic mice expressing amyloid precursor protein (APP) (see the related article beginning on page 2190). These findings further support the notion that modulation of autophagy, in this case through beclin 1, may represent a novel therapeutic strategy for AD.

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